

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN STABILITY OPERATIONS: A CHALLENGE TO ARMY ENTERPRISE

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USAWC CLASS OF 2010

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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 30 MAR 2010		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Strategic Leadership in Stability Operations: A Challenge to Army Enterprise				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Robert Burk				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT see attached					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 30	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Robert Kevin Burk

TITLE: Strategic Leadership in Stability Operations: A Challenge to Army Enterprise

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 25 March 2010 WORD COUNT: 5,594 PAGES: 30

KEY TERMS: Doctrine Jurisdiction, Expertise, Civil Affairs, Military Police, Core Competency, Engineers, Full-Spectrum Conflict, Experiential Skill

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The 21st Century will be an era of persistent, full-spectrum conflict ranging from peaceful competition to general war. Military conflict in this era will encompass the full spectrum of operations to include offensive, defensive, and stability operations. In the past decade the Army has demonstrated its competence in offensive and defensive operations, but has struggled to develop competency in stability operations. The Army must develop a core competency in stability operations equal to that which it currently has in combat operations. To do this, the Army must determine jurisdiction over the tasks inherent in the mission as a means of identifying where in the Institution the skills and expertise reside. The paper will identify that these tasks require skill and expertise that are resident in certain Army branches. The Army must assess its strategic leadership capacity in those branches to determine whether core competency can be claimed. The paper takes the position that current strategic leadership is not sufficiently diverse in the professional skills and expertise that stability operations require. The Army should address the challenge of attaining core competency in stability operations by seeking “whole of Army” solutions through the Army Enterprise.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN STABILITY OPERATIONS: A CHALLENGE TO ARMY ENTERPRISE

My fundamental concern is that there is not commensurate institutional support for the capabilities needed to win today's wars and some of their likely successors.

—Secretary Of Defense Robert Gates¹

For the foreseeable future, the United States will likely be engaged in an era of political instability and persistent conflict which will encompass the full spectrum of military operations. These operations will range from high intensity offensive operations to lower intensity defensive operations to what have come to be known as stability operations. Though the Army has had much success in prosecuting the high to medium intensity offensive and defensive operations of the wars it has fought these last eight years, it has found itself muddling through the more unfamiliar, complex, and oftentimes ambiguous tasks inherent in stability operations.² It is in this complex environment of stability operations that the Army will find itself operating for extended periods of time, and in which it will devote a significant portion of its deployable combat power. To succeed, it will require the development of a core competency in stability operations – something the Army does not currently possess but definitely needs.

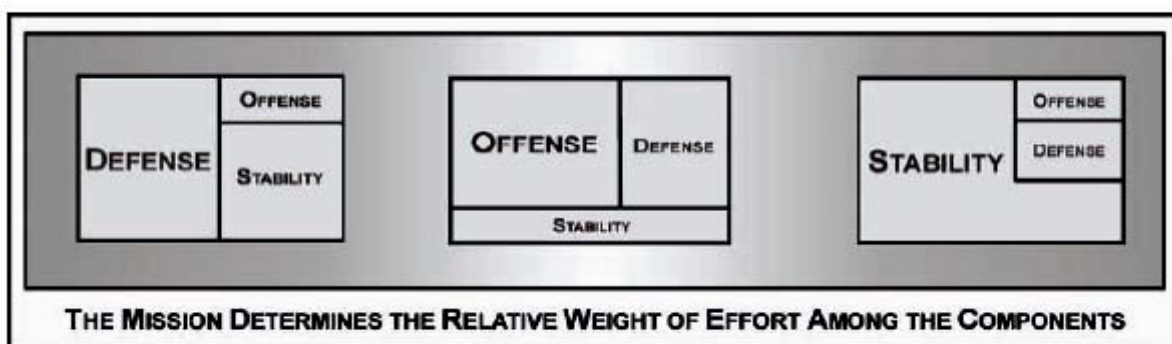


Figure 1: Full Spectrum Operations³

What is core competency? Core competency is a business concept that describes a unique product or service that a firm capitalizes upon in order to earn a profit.⁴ In a military sense core competency can be defined as a professional skill or set of skills that a Service, in this case the Army, relies upon to accomplish the missions it is assigned, and which provides a fundamental capability the Department of Defense needs to accomplish its mission. Attaining and maintaining core competency requires professional expertise, jurisdiction, and legitimacy.⁵ And it requires strategic leadership.

Strategic leadership is defined by the US Army War College as

a process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy, and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats.⁶

Strategic leaders are important because they provide guidance, resources, and vision to the organizations they lead. They provide leadership and executive-level legitimacy to their profession, and provide their subordinate leaders the benefit of their accumulated skill, knowledge, and experience. They guide the organizations they lead through challenges, and it is in this critical function that their experience, skill, and knowledge are most important.

The operations of the 21st Century have made obvious the need for a core competency in stability operations, and in November 2005 the Department of Defense (DOD) issued DOD Directive 3000.05, requiring the Services to develop competency in stability operations. The Directive further stated that stability operations are a core military mission that the Department must be able to conduct and support.⁷ It also mandated semiannual reports to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD (P))

and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by the heads of DOD components with responsibilities assigned in the Directive. The first of these was delivered in 2007.

In a subsequent DOD Instruction in September 2009, USD (P) Michèle Flournoy provided further clarification to the 2005 Directive by requiring that stability operations be given a priority for resources, competency, and capability comparable to combat operations, and that these operations would be explicitly addressed and integrated across all DOD activities.⁸ The purpose of this instruction was to make it clear to the Services that they were required to have two profoundly different core capabilities: a high-end combat capability and a capability for securing and preserving the peace through stability operations.⁹

Though certainly not unique to the Army, these operations encompass tasks for which the land component possesses certain advantages and would be expected to lead. As the Department's premier land power component, the Army has rightfully taken the initiative for developing doctrine for conducting these operations. Central to this effort is a comprehensive approach to stability operations that integrates many of the "soft power" skills of statecraft with the core competencies of military forces, international partners, humanitarian organizations, and the private sector.¹⁰ Developing this core competency will better enable the Army – and the DOD -- to win its current and future conflicts.¹¹

To develop a core competency in stability operations the Army should adopt the approach it uses to objectively analyze all other major doctrinal requirements and challenges-- a capability analysis following the integrated Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF)

solution analysis framework. This paper poses that, with regard to professional core competency in stability operations and its demand for technical and experiential expertise, the most important component in the DOTMLPF analysis is leadership, specifically strategic leadership.

While it is true that stability operations benefit from the professional expertise of the civilian sector, the Army has learned from hard experience that it often must “go it alone” by being prepared to conduct stability operations across the spectrum of conflict, from the tactical to the strategic level of operations, and for extended periods of time.¹² Units must be able to conduct stability operations, and Army leaders with professional technical and experiential expertise must be available to lead the effort in the absence of professional civilian expertise. To be able to build this capability the Army must look to its intrinsic professional doctrine developing institutions – its branches – and the strategic leadership capacity possessed within them to develop and maintain the “soft skills” that require a professional level of technical and experiential expertise not practically achieved in the combat arms.

The paper proposes that the Army has not done enough to develop a core competency in stability operations by only producing doctrine and teaching stability operations concepts at professional military education (PME) schools. To attain professional core competency it must also build a strategic leadership capability to develop the institutional capacity to lead in the development and implementation of the doctrine.¹³ This professional expertise is legitimized by a combination of academic knowledge, professional certification, practical application through experience, and professional relationships. It further proposes that certain branches in the Army should

be responsible for recruiting, training, maintaining, and retaining a professional officer corps with a diversity of skills, experience, and professional knowledge of the “soft skills” that stability operations require.

The paper evaluates stability operations and its five primary stability tasks by defining each task and reviewing the subtasks, in order to identify relevant branch skill and expertise jurisdictions. The results are then used to assess the strategic leadership capacity, in terms of the current general officer demographic within those branches, to lead and advocate for the development of a professional core competency in stability operations. This information is then used to assess the current capacity of the Army’s strategic leadership to claim core competency in stability operations.

The assessment reveals that the current strategic leadership may not be able to claim core competency in stability operations because it lacks a diversity of general officers with the professional expertise in the “soft skills” – a reference to those skills associated with the diplomatic, economic, and informational aspects of national power -- that enable the core competency. The necessary broad strategic leadership could be attained by developing a senior leader expertise of those Army branches that claim the preponderance of jurisdiction over stability operations tasks. The paper takes a position that developing this professional strategic Army leadership, to include providing for operational leadership experience, is a necessary prerequisite to attaining a professional core competency in stability operations.

As a potential way ahead, the paper introduces the Army Core Enterprise as a means of providing a necessarily holistic approach in the development of a professional corps of strategic leaders that are technically and experientially competent in stability

operations. The summary poses three issues that offer several critical questions that the Army Core Enterprise should consider in an effort to determine whether a technically skilled and experienced corps of strategic leaders is indeed a prerequisite to the attainment of professional core competency in stability operations.

Determining Stability Operations Task Jurisdiction

Joint Publication 3-0 defines stability operations as an overarching term which encompasses various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.¹⁴

Stability operations encompass tasks for which the Army has not generally considered a part of its core mission set. These operations often require technical and experiential skills that are most often associated with the missions of other (US) governmental agencies (OGAs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). They are often conducted in a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) environment.¹⁵ As such, the Army has often assumed that these organizations would be the follow on effort to conduct stability operations in the aftermath of major combat operations. Recent experience in Afghanistan and Iraq has revealed that this is often not the case, making the development of a professional core competency in stability operations an operational necessity.¹⁶

The Army's operations doctrine manual (FM 3-0) defines stability operations as those military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to

conflict to establish or maintain order in States and regions. The doctrine further states that stability operations are characterized by five primary stability tasks.¹⁷ The tasks are:

- providing civil security
- providing civil control
- restoring essential services
- supporting effective governance
- supporting economic and infrastructure development

In the sections that follow, each stability task is examined in some detail by defining the task, examining its subtasks, and identifying branch primacies for each as appropriate.

Providing Civil Security. General Purpose Forces (GPF) must be able to protect the local population from domestic and foreign threats, and be able to assist host-nation security forces in fighting terrorists, criminal, and other small but hostile groups. If the host-nation has inadequate civil security capability, U.S. Forces will provide security while simultaneously building a host-nation capability. Due to its obvious importance, Civil Security is required prior to engaging in subsequent primary stability tasks.¹⁸

This subtask is the most manpower intensive of the five primary stability tasks, and will usually require general purpose combat force (GPCF) capability and leadership competency. Additional skills and expertise may be provided by Civil Affairs (CA), Military Police (MP), Chemical (CM), Military Intelligence (MI) and Ordnance (OD) branches. Key subtasks, with forces designed to accomplish them listed parenthetically, include:¹⁹

- Enforce cessation of hostilities, peace agreements, other arrangements (GPCF, MP).

- Determine disposition and constitution of national armed and intelligence services (GPCF, MI).
- Conduct disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (GPCF, CA, MP).
- Conduct border control, boundary security, and freedom of movement (GPCF, MP, MI).
- Support identification. Requires technical expertise such as forensics (MP) and the Civil Affairs task of Populace and Resources Control (PRC).²⁰
- Protect key personnel and facilities (GPCF, MP, MI).
- Clear explosive and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) hazards. Requires explosive ordnance disposal (OD/EOD) and CM expertise and technical leadership.

Providing Civil Control. Army doctrine defines civil control as those activities performed to regulate selected behavior and activities of individuals and groups in order to reduce risk and promote security. It facilitates the provision of security and essential services, and the coexistence of populations with military forces. It is a requirement to establish civil security and civil control prior to engaging in subsequent lines of stability operations.²¹ It is a primary stability task that relies heavily upon the skills and expertise of the Civil Affairs branch.

Many subtasks also rely upon the expertise of the MP Branch and the Judge Advocate General Corps (JA). At least one subtask benefits from the expertise of the MI branch. Depending upon the magnitude of the manpower requirement, additional GPCF may be required. The key subtasks include:²²

- Establish public order and safety (CA, MP, JA).

- Establish interim criminal justice system (CA, MP, JA).
- Support law enforcement and police reform (CA, MP).
- Support judicial reform (CA, JA).
- Support property dispute resolution processes (CA, JA).
- Support justice system reform (CA, MP, JA).
- Support corrections reform (CA, MP, JA).
- Support war crimes courts and tribunals (CA, MP, JA, MI).
- Support public outreach and community rebuilding programs (CA).

Restoring Essential Services. This primary stability task is defined as those activities that go beyond civil security and civil control and address the effects of humanitarian crisis.²³ Technical and experiential expertise is required by the six branches or corps within the Army Medical Department (AMEDD).²⁴ In addition to expertise from the CA, MP, and JA branches, expertise from the Engineer (EN) and Logistics (LG) branches is also required. GPCF may be required for manpower-intensive subtasks. Key subtasks include:

- Providing essential civil services, to include emergency medical care, rescue services, and basic sanitation (AMEDD, EN, MP).
- Mitigating the effects of dislocated civilians (CA, MP, AMEDD, LG, GPCF).
- Support famine prevention and emergency food relief programs (CA, AMEDD, LG, GPCF).
- Support nonfood relief and provide emergency shelter (CA, EN, GPCF).
- Support humanitarian demining (EN).
- Support human rights initiatives (CA, JA).

- Support public health programs to include preventing epidemic disease (CA, AMEDD).
- Support education programs (CA).

Supporting Effective Governance. Some degree of support to governance is required when a host-nation government cannot adequately perform its basic civil functions. In certain circumstances international law requires military forces to provide basic civil administration functions under the auspices of a transitional military authority.²⁵ This primary stability task requires skills that are resident in the CA branch, but may be performed by general military leadership with other branches in technical support. Key subtasks include:

- Support to transitional administrations (CA, JA).
- Support development of local governance (CA, MP).
- Support anticorruption initiatives (CA, MP, JA).
- Support elections (GPCF, CA, MP).

Supporting Economic and Infrastructure Development. The most technically and experientially challenging primary stability task is supporting economic and infrastructure development. It may be one of the most important as well, because sound economic policies promote growth and remedy underlying tensions in society.²⁶ It consists of ten subtasks which are best conducted by other U.S. governmental agencies (OGA), intergovernmental (IGO) or nongovernmental (NGO) organizations, or private voluntary organizations (PVO). The military is often in support of one or more of these agencies or organizations and has a role to play in identifying priorities and providing manpower. Military expertise for all ten subtasks could be developed through Army Civil

Affairs with the skills and expertise of other Army branches, particularly the Finance (FI) branch. These ten key subtasks include:

- Support economic generation and enterprise creation (CA, FI).
- Support monetary institutions and programs (CA, FI).
- Support national treasury operations (CA, FI).
- Support public sector investment programs (CA, EN, FI).
- Support private sector development (CA and FI).
- Protect natural resources and environment (EN, MP, JA).
- Support agricultural development programs (CA, EN).
- Restore transportation infrastructure (CA, EN).
- Restore telecommunications infrastructure. Technical expertise would be provided by the Signal Corps (SC), in addition to CA and EN.
- Support general infrastructure reconstruction programs (CA, EN).

The following table (Table 1) provides a summary of the five primary stability tasks and 38 subtasks as outlined in the Army's Stability Operations doctrine manual, FM 3-07. Each primary task requires technical and experiential expertise from more than one basic branch, as do each of the subtasks. This is depicted in the table by the gray blocks which indicate those branches identified as having jurisdiction in a given task or subtask. The table offers an intuitive assignment of branch jurisdiction for each subtask, which is based upon the description of that subtask in FM 3-07 evaluated against existing branch doctrine or the description of unique branch functions as stated in Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management.

BRANCH	GPCF	CA	MP	EN	CM	LG	EOD	FI	MI	SC	JA	AMEDD
Stability Tasks and Subtasks												
Provide Civil Security	P		S						S			
• Enforce Cessation of Hostilities, etc.												
• Disposition of Forces and Intel Services												
• Disarm, Demobilize, and Reintegrate												
• Conduct Border Control, Boundary Security												
• Support Identification												
• Protect Key Personnel and Facilities												
• Clear Explosive and CBRN Hazards												
Provide Civil Control		P	S								S	
• Establish Public Order and Safety												
• Establish Interim Criminal Justice System												
• Support Law Enforcement and Police Reform												
• Support Judicial Reform												
• Support Property Dispute Resolution												
• Support Justice System Reform												
• Support Corrections Reform												
• Support War Crimes Courts and Tribunals												
• Support Public Outreach												
Restoring Essential Services		P		S								S
• Emergency Medical Care, Rescue, Sanitation												
• Mitigate Effects of Dislocated Civilians												
• Support Famine Prevention and Food Relief												
• Support Nonfood Relief Programs												
• Support Humanitarian Demining												
• Support Human Rights Initiatives												
• Support Public Health and Prevent Epidemics												
• Support Education Programs												
Supporting Effective Governance		P	S								S	
• Support to Transitional Administrations												
• Support Development of Local Governance												
• Support Anticorruption Initiatives												
• Support Elections												
Support Economic and Infrastructure Development		P		S				S				
• Support Economic Generation												
• Support Monetary Institutions and Programs												
• Support National Treasury Operations												
• Support Public Sector Investment												
• Support Private Sector Development												
• Protect Natural Resources and Environment												
• Support Agricultural Development												
• Restore Transportation Infrastructure												
• Restore Telecommunications Infrastructure												
• Support General Infrastructure Reconstruction												
BRANCH	GPCF	CA	MP	EN	CM	LG	EOD	FI	MI	SC	JA	AMEDD
TOTAL TASKS BY BRANCH	10	30	17	9	1	2	1	5	5	1	10	4
Primary Stability Task Jurisdiction (5 Total)	1 of 5	4 of 5										
Supporting Stability Task Jurisdiction (10 Total)			3 of 10	2 of 10				1 of 10	1 of 10		2 of 10	1 of 10

Table 1: Stability Operations Primary Tasks and Subtasks to Branch Crosswalk

The accumulation of subtasks over which a branch is determined to have jurisdiction then provides a justification for assigning primary jurisdiction to that branch over a particular primary stability task, which is indicated in the table by a black box with

a “P.” In all five primary stability tasks two branches were also identified, based upon the intuitive assessment of subtasks, to have supporting jurisdiction. This is depicted in the table by a gray box with an “S.” Jurisdiction over a task or subtask occurs when it is defined as being inclusive of a domain (branch) within which expert knowledge is applied,²⁷ and is derived from the respective branch doctrine manual or the branch functions outlined in DA PAM 600-3. The Table facilitates the assessment of stability operations tasks and subtasks in terms of primary and supporting jurisdiction, which in turn provides a starting point for how the Army might attain the core competency.

The first observation revealed by the table is that four of five primary stability tasks rely upon skills that are not possessed by general purpose combat forces (GPCF). GPCF are defined as those forces composed primarily of members of the combat arms branches and which provide the bulk of forces intrinsic to Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). These four primary stability tasks require skills that demand some level of technical competence normally achieved through formal education and that benefit from application through experience. The one exception is the stability task of Providing Civil Security, which has five of seven subtasks that can rely upon the manpower and leadership present in GPCF.

The second observation is that the Civil Affairs Branch has a claim, by virtue of its missions and functions, to overall jurisdiction of stability operations because it has primary jurisdiction over four of the five primary stability tasks based upon the subtask analysis. Civil Affairs core tasks of Populace and Resources control (PRC), Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA), Civil Information Management (CIM), Support to Civil

Administration (SCA), and Nation Assistance (NA) provide a technical and experiential expertise potential to the conduct of stability operations that no other branch can claim.

The third observation is that the Military Police (MP), Judge Advocate General (JA), Engineers (EN), Army Medical Department (AMEDD), Military Intelligence (MI), and Finance Corps (FI) have jurisdiction over several stability operations subtasks. The MP branch has jurisdiction of 17 subtasks and supporting jurisdiction of three primary stability tasks. Engineer branch has jurisdiction of nine subtasks and can claim supporting jurisdiction of two primary stability tasks. The Military Intelligence branch has jurisdiction over five subtasks and one primary stability task. The Judge Advocate branch has jurisdiction of ten subtasks and supporting jurisdiction of two primary stability tasks. The AMEDD has jurisdiction over four subtasks and supporting jurisdiction over a primary stability task. The Logistics branch, the Chemical branch, the Signal branch, and EOD each have at least one subtask they can claim jurisdiction of that contributes to the technical and experiential expertise needed in stability operations.

Perhaps the most surprising result of the task to jurisdiction crosswalk is that the Finance branch could potentially have jurisdiction of five subtasks and supporting jurisdiction over one primary stability task. This assertion is based upon the unique skills and specialized degrees finance officers are encouraged to have in concentrations such as finance, accounting, business, economics, computer sciences, or information systems management. These skills and academic backgrounds are of obvious pertinence to the primary stability task of supporting economic and infrastructure development.²⁸

The Military Police branch has five functions which contribute broadly to stability operations competency: area security operations, maneuver and mobility support operations, law enforcement, internment and resettlement operations, and police intelligence operations. These functions relate directly to many stability tasks and subtasks and contribute to the technical and experiential expertise required to attain professional core competency in them.

The Engineer branch brings the expertise of construction engineers that are capable of managing construction projects and supervising the interior and exterior repair of facilities to include carpentry, masonry, plumbing, and electrical equipment. They are capable of directing complex civil works programs that include water procurement and storage, flood control, and natural resource development and restoration. Engineers provide technical expertise to plan, organize, and supervise the maintenance and repair of utilities equipment, maintenance support to medical hospitals, and the installation of fixed or mobile power plants.²⁹ Many of these skills relate directly to stability operations tasks and subtasks.

This paper will focus the examination on the strategic leadership capacity within the five Army Competitive Category (ACC) branches (CA, MP, EN, MI, FI) that have the preponderance of jurisdiction over stability operations tasks and subtasks. For ease of reference, these branches will be referred to as the “stability operations branches.” Looking across the 38 subtasks and four of the five primary stability tasks reveals that these branches provide, or have the potential to provide, the technical and experiential expertise and capability to develop a professional core competency in stability operations.

Why Strategic Leadership?

Strategic leadership is important in any organization, and it is especially important in the Army. Army strategic leaders provide the guidance, resources, and vision to the Force. They translate national security requirements into Army strategic and operational capabilities. They provide leadership to their branches and executive-level legitimacy to their profession, and they provide their subordinate leaders and Soldiers the benefit of their accumulated skill, knowledge, and experience. They guide the organizations they lead through challenges, and it is in this critical function that a diversity of experience, skill, and knowledge is most important. The challenge of developing a professional core competency is no exception in this regard.

Developing core competency in any capability, but especially one that relies heavily upon professional technical and experiential expertise, must begin with leadership. In the case of stability operations, an argument could be made that strategic leadership is especially important for at least three reasons:

- First, it provides strategic and executive level expertise and legitimacy for the competency;
- Second, it provides strategic guidance and resources for the development of doctrine and organizations necessary to implement the competency;
- Third, it provides for the mentorship, vision, relevancy, and vibrancy of the junior and mid-grade officers within those branches that develop and provide the technical and experiential professional competency.

The latter is important in preserving the branch's ability to attract and retain talent so that the torch of strategic leadership competency is preserved over time.

An analysis of the current general officer demographic reveals that the Army does not currently possess a broad balance of strategic leadership in terms of overall distribution of general officer billets by branch. Because so few generals are selected from the stability operations branches it could be argued that the current strategic leadership does not have the diversity of professional knowledge and experience necessary to claim a professional core competency in stability operations.

Of the 309 general officers in the regular Army ACC in October 2009 only 41 general officers (14%) were from the five ACC branches identified as having jurisdiction over a majority of primary stability tasks and subtasks. Of these branches, Civil Affairs has no general officers, and Military Police has only three. Engineers have 21, Finance has five, and the Military Intelligence branch has 15. Figure 2 provides a comparison:

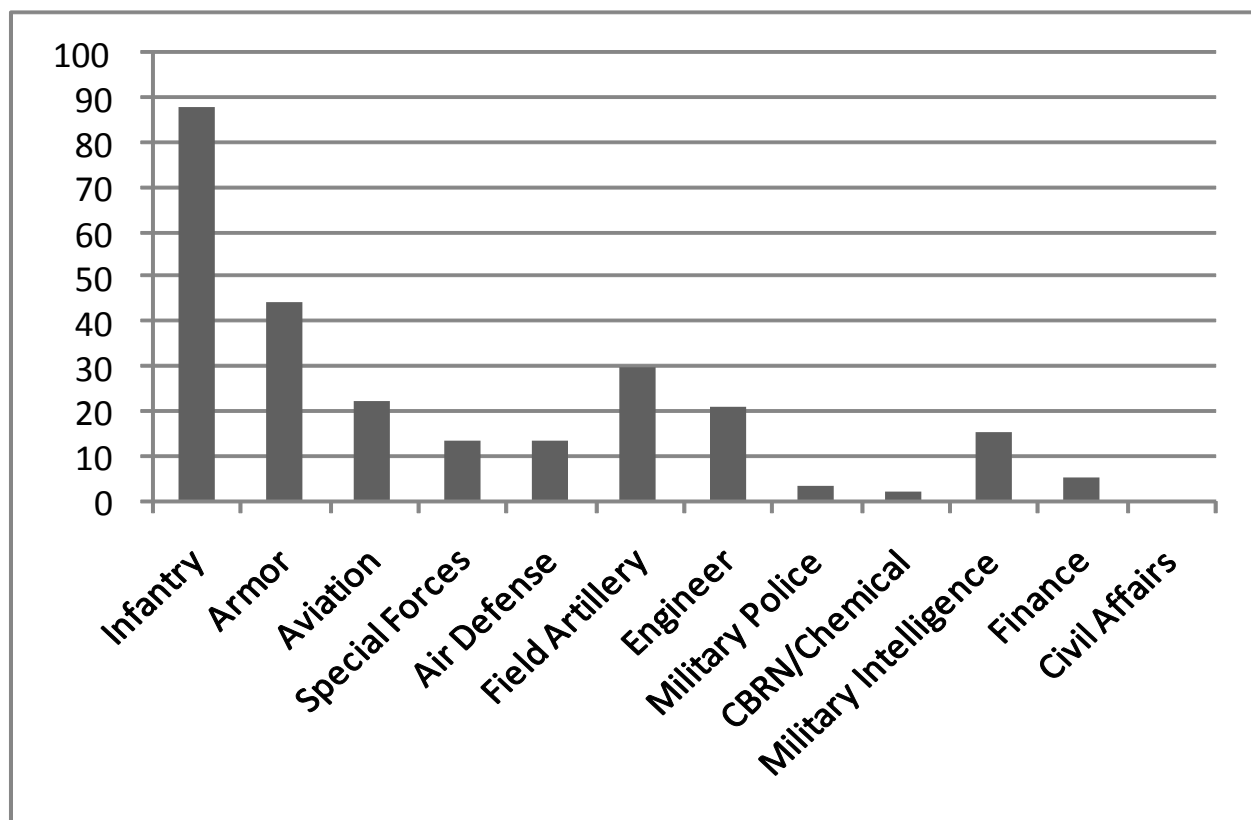


Figure 2: Regular Army ACC General Officers by Selected Branches³⁰

The chart requires some context to be fully appreciated. First, it shows that a majority of general officers in the Regular Army ACC are in those branches of the Maneuver (Infantry, Armor, and Aviation) and Fires (Artillery and Air Defense) functional categories. This is reflective of the Army's culture and history as the Nation's premier land-power component and acknowledges that this power is manifested in the traditional combat arms. No one would challenge that these branches should provide the majority of the Army's strategic leadership. Nor can it be challenged that these branches provide the bulk of forces that make up the Army.

Second, the Civil Affairs branch is a relatively new branch in the Regular Army and does have general officer strategic leadership capacity in the Army Reserve. As a nascent branch of the Regular Army it is still building a cadre of officers that should now be reaching the rank and experience level where the potential for general officer selection can be realized. It will be interesting to see if its general officer potential will actually will be realized.

Third, with 21 general officers it should be acknowledged that the Corps of Engineers has 12 general officer billets authorized, and that these positions satisfy Title 10 United States Code requirements for which the Army has executive agency. There are 2 general officers associated with the Maneuver Support Center, leaving seven Engineer general officers serving in billets that are not Engineer branch-unique. These seven general officers are assigned to operational Army billets that are not engineer specific, and provide the branch with a strategic leadership experience and opportunity that further legitimizes their expertise and provides vitality to their branch officer corps.

With 15 general officers, the Military Intelligence branch has perhaps the best strategic leadership competency potential of the five ACC branches relative to the number and type of stability tasks it can claim jurisdiction over. Most of its general officers are serving on strategic and operational level staffs, and this also provides the branch with a strategic leadership experience and opportunity that legitimizes their expertise and provides vitality to their officer corps. The Military Police and Finance branch general officers are, with very few exceptions, serving only in technical positions that arguably do not offer the operational leadership experience that serves to broaden their technical and experiential skills, and thereby enhance their professional legitimacy in the Army and in their field of expertise.

The purpose of the chart is to show that the Army invests less than 14% of its strategic leadership billets in the branches that are predominantly responsible for providing core competency in stability operations. Of these, a majority of general officers are serving in technical billets and do not have the opportunity for operational assignments that would enhance their technical and experiential skills, and thereby enhance their professional legitimacy in the Army and in their field of expertise. If one accepts the premise that strategic leadership capacity is a requirement for professional core competency, then it would be difficult for the Army to claim that it has a core competency in stability operations when so few of its general officers have the technical and experiential expertise that stability operations require.

An Enterprise Approach to Core Competent Strategic Leadership in Stability Operations

If developing a professional core competency in stability operations is important, the Army will have to “think out of the box”-- something it claims to appreciate but in reality is reticent to actually do. Army senior leaders have made it clear that the

watchword of the present decade is balance, and it is associated with buzzwords of the past decade like transformation, agility, and “full-spectrum.”³¹ While it is admirable that the Army acknowledges the need to be balanced, it may be helpful if the Army started with its strategic leadership. It comes down to this: to have professional strategic leadership competency in stability operations you have to have strategic leaders with the skills and expertise. If Army leadership is truly up to the challenge to “put everything on the table” then it will need a mechanism that has the charter and the leadership to do just that. Institutional Adaptation through the Army Enterprise may be that mechanism.

The Army Enterprise seeks to restructure policy, adapt the institution, and change the culture in order to focus resources on the good of the entire Army – a “whole of Army” approach to bettering the institution.³² Creating a corps of strategic leaders with a broad-based professional core competency in stability operations will require such an approach. Institutional Adaptation takes a holistic view of leadership, problem solving, and decision making mechanisms in order to align policies, processes, and procedures to maximize efficiency and effectiveness across the entire Army.³³

There are several issues the Army Enterprise should examine in determining whether strategic leadership is critical to the Army’s ability to claim legitimate core competency in stability operations. These questions center on whether Army senior leaders accept the arguments that:

1. Jurisdiction over the mission tasks is relevant to the core competency;
2. That technically and experientially competent strategic leadership is required to convey legitimacy and expertise to the core competency;

3. That professionally competent strategic leadership is critical to recruiting, training, maintaining, and retaining professionally skilled and experienced officers to attain the core competency.

To this end, the Human Capital and Readiness Core Enterprises, two of the four subcomponents of the overall enterprise approach, should take up the following issues and questions:

Does Jurisdiction Over Stability Tasks Convey Doctrinal Responsibility to Certain Branches for the Development of Expert Leaders, to Include Strategic Leaders? Within this overarching question are several others: Is the Army adequately challenging its own institutions to develop stability operations doctrine and a professional core competent leadership? Should members of those branches be expected to attain and maintain technical and experiential expertise in stability tasks? How should those branches ensure that technical expertise recruited, attained, maintained, and retained? Can legitimacy in stability operations be achieved by the Army if it only produces a doctrine that focuses on general purpose forces? Is technical and experiential expertise required to legitimately claim a professional core competency in stability operations?

These questions center on the issue of branch jurisdiction over stability operations tasks, and depend upon whether Army doctrine leaders would agree that jurisdiction conveys doctrine responsibility and proponentcy. The Army's current doctrine for stability operations is an overarching one, produced for an audience of middle and senior Army leadership in the ranks of major and above.³⁴ The need for overarching doctrine is not challenged, but what should be challenged is the Army's ability to attain

professional core competency without the doctrinal executive agency by those Army branches that have jurisdiction over the tasks.

Is Strategic Leadership Expertise in Stability Operations a Requirement for Claiming Professional Core Competency for the Army? Is the current general officer demographic sufficiently broad in its technical and experiential skills that the Army can claim it is core competent in stability operations? Is it important to diversify the current general officer corps by selecting more general officers in the stability operations branches in order to claim professional core competency in stability operations? Is the current Army strategic leadership so homogeneous in its background, skill and experience that it cannot claim the professional technical and experiential expertise stability operations requires? Are those who are professionally competent in the tasks of stability operations skills only “enablers” of general practitioners of the mission?

To successfully develop core competency in stability operations the Army Enterprise should take a holistic look at how it selects, develops, and employs its technically and experientially skilled leaders at the strategic, operational, and tactical level of operations. This should challenge long-held assumptions about who leads and who “enables” when it comes to conducting stability operations – perhaps even reversing the traditional roles. The assumptions about who is qualified to lead stability operations should be reevaluated in order to provide operational leadership experience to those officers that are currently not viewed as qualified to lead them today. Can the Army envision a Civil Affairs, Finance, or Military Police general officer leading a stability operation mission at the strategic level? These are serious challenges to the Army culture and will require a holistic approach if change is to occur.

Is a Strategic Leadership Important in Recruiting, Training, Maintaining, and Retaining Professionally Competent Officers and Soldiers in Stability Operations? Is strategic leadership required to earn credibility, legitimacy, and expertise among fellow professionals in stability operations? Is core competent strategic leadership important in facilitating the professional relationships with the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) community? Is strategic leadership opportunity important or relevant in recruiting and retaining the professional talent needed to attain and maintain competency in stability operations? Are there sufficient career incentives for “soft skill” competent officers to join and stay in the Army, specifically with regard to the potential for promotion to strategic level leadership? Does promotion opportunity to general officer matter to officers in the stability operations branches?

Strategic leadership in the stability branches would provide the professional associations, legitimacy and expertise necessary to recruit, train, maintain, and retain a corps of officers with the necessary professional technical skills upon which the Army could claim core competency. These leaders would also provide an executive oversight for these branches, ensuring that their members are not misused, abused, or otherwise marginalized. Strategic leaders would ensure the vision, purpose, and vitality necessary for improving stability operations doctrine. And finally, these strategic leaders would incentivize the officer corps by providing an opportunity for promotion to strategic level leadership that does not currently exist.

As the Army enters a new decade of persistent conflict, it would do well to reflect upon its experience over the last eight years of conflict and the increasing importance of stability operations. These operations will continue to be a staple of future conflict,

reinforcing the need for professionally skilled Soldiers and leaders capable of performing the stability tasks that are critical to securing the peace. For the Army, developing a corps of professional strategic leaders with expertise in these skills is a necessary first step in legitimizing the claim of core competency in stability operations.

Endnotes

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